

# Mazda has perfected the Smart Idle Stop System

Continued from pg. 3

Mazda said there are currently about 20 hydrogen filling stations in Japan but this is expected to grow dramatically because they believe the demand is there.

Mazda has also perfected the Smart Idle Stop System (SISS). Instead of just turning off at a stop and having the starter motor crank the engine into life when the gas pedal is pushed, SISS uses a different method. It turns off at a stop, but when the gas pedal is depressed, it reverses the piston by two strokes and then utilizes the compression created to start the engine dispensing with the starter altogether.

In places like downtown Tokyo where congestion means cars idle up to 30 per cent of the time, the fuel saving is significant.

I also tried SISS at the Mazda track. Like a hybrid, the engine stops running with no sound or jerk. At startup, there is a slight delay between hitting the gas and the engine coming to life. There is no lurch forward, which I was expecting, but there is a hint of engine noise.

Besides using plant products for plastics and fabrics, Mazda also took a look at the painting process and found that solvents in paint like Xylene and Toluene and CO2 emissions from the baking process had to be addressed.

Using water-based paints and eliminating the primer paint booth and baking oven process they can get a better paint job using less paint by applying the primer, base coat and clear coat in one go before sending it the baking stage.

Combining this with a new robotic

spraying system, Mazda has cut CO2 by 15 per cent, solvent emissions by 45 per cent and paint costs by 15 per cent while getting as good or better a coating quality than a conventional paint system.

Besides investigated pre-crash safety, Mazda is trying create what it calls the Universal Design Cockpit, a sort of one-size-fits-all driver position that is equally useable by any size operator.

Mazda says it will bring in these and other technologies but will also keep Mazda vehicles responsive and fun to drive while remaining stylish.

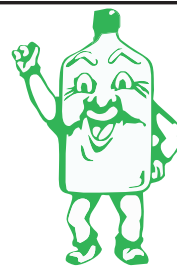
## CX-9 named top SUV

Motor Trend magazine has named the Mazda CX-9 crossover SUV its 2007 Sport/Utility of the Year.

Beating one of the toughest fields in recent memory, the CX-9 was, according to Motor Trend editor in chief, Angus MacKenzie, the judges' unanimous decision. It topped 11 other contenders.

To judge contenders for the award, Motor Trend's editorial staff conducted exhaustive off-road, street and track testing, and carefully considered essentials such as driving performance, safety and features.

Sport/Utility of the Year is not a comparison test. Each contender was evaluated against three simple criteria: superiority (engineering, design, utilization of resources); significance (its impact on the market), and value (what buyers get for their money versus the competition).



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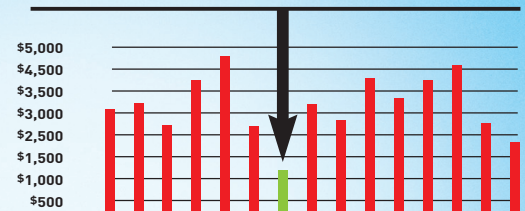
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